

Fr Richard Morris doesn't remember much about his ordination, except being humbled by "lying on the floor being prayed for".

He said being able to give a blessing after the ordination was also something that stayed with him.

While the call to become a priest is "a mystery", Fr Morris said he was attracted to the idea as a young altar server.

As with Fr Vildzius, Fr Barrymore Hynes was a priest who influenced him greatly and a person he "respected deeply".

Currently parish priest of Mt Barker and Strathalbyn, Fr Morris has served in the west of the city at Semaphore, Croydon and Woodville, in the north at Elizabeth and Salisbury and, for nearly half his priestly life, in the South East.

Travelling to the Holy Land and on to Rome for Holy Week and Easter was a highlight of the past 50 years but more important was that "wherever I was a priest people welcomed me into their homes and into their lives".

"Celebrating the Eucharist with people of faith is at the heart of who I am as priest," he said.

"Being there for people in whatever way they needed me – that's what being a priest is about for me.

"I have seen the priesthood as a gift and I have tried to use that gift for others. People have been very generous to me and cared for me well."

Fr Morris is looking forward to retirement from full-time parish ministry when he turns 75 next year. He hopes to be able to help where needed but also plans to "spend a bit more time in the bush with the birds".

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